

Cross Examination Of Douglas Ends

By Betty Medsger,
Washington Post Staff Writer

3/14/72
HARRISBURG, Pa., March 15—The cross-examination of Boyd F. Douglas Jr., the government's key witness in the trial here of seven antiwar activists, ended today with defense attorneys confronting Douglas with discrepancies between his testimony and what he had said before.

Asked why his testimony included important information he did not give earlier, either in 1971 to the federal grand jury that indicted the defendants or to the FBI in regular reports filed in 1970 and reviewed by him in 1971, Douglas said:

"There's a lot of testimony I've given in this courtroom that refreshes my memory when I testify."

His reports to the FBI in 1970, the prosecution has said, are the keystone of government's case that the defendants conspired to kidnap presidential adviser Henry A. Kissinger, to bomb tunnels under federal buildings in Washington and to raid federal offices.

Douglas told defense counsel Leonard Boudin that he was not trying in 1970 to build connections between numerous peace activists whom he would then report to the FBI.

Boudin read then to the jury several letters Douglas admitted he wrote in 1970 while he was an inmate at Lewisburg, Pa., federal penitentiary and also was a full-time student at nearby Bucknell University on a study-release program.

"I myself am about what Phil and Dan Berrigan are about," Douglas wrote to David Greenberg, on Nov. 24, 1970.

"Just in case you didn't know . . . I am a Catholic Leftist. I would ask that you give me your opinion as to how you would proceed with such literature . . . Maybe underground press. I have contacts, mostly in the East. What about out your way? . . . I hope to see in January."

The informer conceded that he wrote to William Davidson, a Haverford College physics professor, for a dual purpose: to inquire about admission to college and to get information for the FBI.

Boudin concluded his extensive cross-examination by reading a 1967 FBI document highly critical of Douglas.

U.S. District Judge R. Dixon Herman today denied without comment a motion for a mistrial by defense attorney Paul O'Dwyer.

O'Dwyer had argued that the judge has a "protective attitude" toward Douglas that "gave rise to an arrogance on the part of the witness which gave him carte blanche to engage in quarrelsome dialogue with counsel, take legal positions with regard to the relevancy of the questions presented, and to usurp the function of the court in making what could only be regarded as judicial rulings."